

MONTANA Economy at a Glance

DECEMBER 2008

EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY

(Does not include self-employed or agricultural employment)

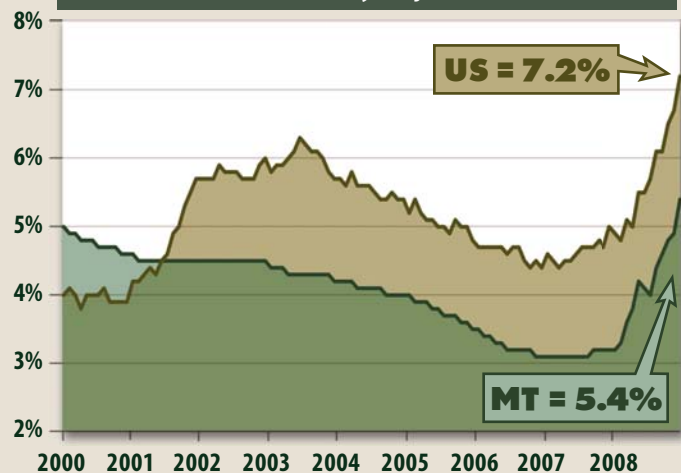
Industry Employment (in thousands)	Dec.(P) 2008	Nov. 2008	Net Change	Percent Change
Total Non-Agricultural	443.2	444.5	-1.3	-0.3%
Natural Resources & Mining	8	8.1	-0.1	-1.2%
Construction	29.7	29.5	0.2	0.7%
Manufacturing	20.2	20.3	-0.1	-0.5%
Trade, Transportation, & Utilities	91.6	92.2	-0.6	-0.7%
Information	7.7	7.7	0.0	0.0%
Financial Activities	21.9	22.0	-0.1	-0.5%
Professional & Business Services	39.9	39.5	0.4	1.0%
Education & Health Services	60.1	60.1	0.0	0.0%
Leisure & Hospitality	61.2	60.2	1.0	1.7%
Other Services	17	17.6	-0.6	-3.4%
Total Government	85.9	87.3	-1.4	-1.6%

(P) denotes preliminary figures

Montana's seasonally-adjusted non-agricultural payroll employment decreased by 1,300 jobs (-0.3%) from November to December 2008. The largest loss occurred in the Total Government sector, with -1,400 jobs (-1.6%); while Leisure & Hospitality showed the largest gain with 1,000 new jobs (+1.7%) over the month.

UNEMPLOYMENT RATE

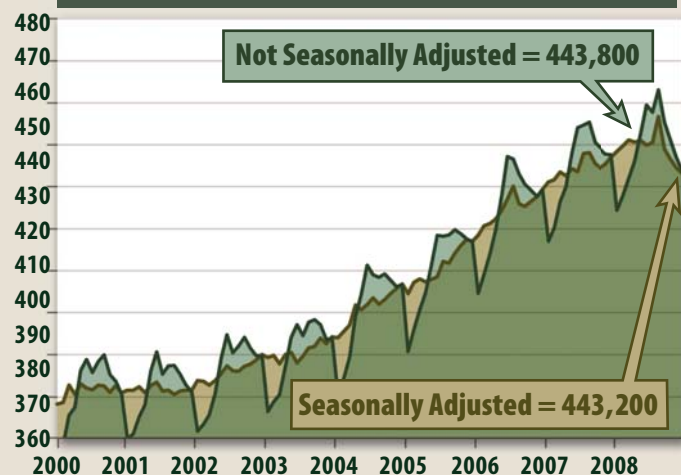
Seasonally Adjusted



Montana's seasonally-adjusted unemployment rate increased to 5.4% in December 2008 from 4.9% in November. The national rate also rose over the month, increasing from 6.8% to 7.2% for December.

NON-FARM EMPLOYMENT

In Thousands



Research and Analysis Bureau

"Montana's Workforce Information Center"

Phone: (406) 444-2430 or (800) 541-3904

P.O. Box 1728 Helena, MT 59624-1728

www.ourfactsyourfuture.org



Introducing the Redesigned Research and Analysis Bureau Website

Research and Analysis has released a complete redesign of our website: www.ourfactsyourfuture.org. The goals of the redesign were to provide more intuitive navigation for new users, reduce the number of clicks for experienced users to access information, and to give the site a more cohesive look and feel.



Because ourfactsyourfuture.org has such a wide variety of users, we divided the site into two sides: the Labor Market Information (LMI) side, and the Career Resources side. The LMI side contains all of the data sets produced by the bureau, such as labor force statistics, occupational wage rates, job projections, and much more. The Career Resources side gives visitors access to the wealth of career development tools and publications created by the Montana Career Resource Network (MCRN). Both sides can be accessed from our redesigned homepage, which also offers quick access to our publications, our monthly featured article, and our newest releases.

For our more experienced users who are familiar with LMI programs and want to go directly to the program pages, links are provided on the left

navigation bar. This sidebar also allows users to look for information based on category (i.e. wages, employment, occupation, etc.), or to access our new interactive training tutorials to learn what Labor Market Information is and how it is used (just click the “Learn More about Labor Market Information” link).

Labor Market Information can be complex and daunting to first-time users. For this reason, our LMI page breaks down our information into the easy to understand categories of Employment Data, Wage Data, Industry Data, Occupations Data, Local Area Information, and Publications. The LMI page features our most commonly-sought statistics in a table at the top of the page. If you are looking for the current state or national unemployment rate, the Consumer Price Index, or Montana’s total payroll employment, you need go no further. But users looking for more specific information can either proceed to the category pages, or use the “Data Search/Custom Tables” feature, which allows users to choose specific data sets, locations, and time frames to create a custom table that can be downloaded as a spreadsheet.



Many of our programs produce information on the same subject using different methods. For instance, clicking the Employment Data button will take you to a page with four different program headings, all of which produce different kinds of employment information. If you are unfamiliar with these programs and the data sets they produce, just click on the bar reading, "Which Data Set Should I Use?" The page that appears will explain what each program is, what type of information it produces, and how their methods differ. In the near future, this page will also include training tutorials for the LMI programs to help you determine which data set will best fulfill your information needs.



The Career Resources side of the website is also known as Montana's Career Resource Network (MCRN). MCRN's goal is to provide all Montanans with the academic and career development information they need to be successful in today's job market. Because MCRN serves all Montanans from grade school students to retirees looking to reenter the workforce, the MCRN page allows visitors to search for information based on four different user types: Students, Parents, Job Seekers, and Teachers.

MCRN produces career publications for K-12 students, adult job seekers, seniors, Montanans with disabilities, and ex-offenders. The MCRN page also gives users access to some incredible web-based career development tools, such as the Montana Career Information System (MCIS). MCIS provides detailed information on more than 500 occupations, 120 programs of study, and current Montana wage, employment, and outlook data. Users can access information on all accredited Montana schools, plus 3,500 other national schools. Students can also search for scholarships, research financial aid options, and take practice SAT and ACT tests. Best of all, MCIS is free to all Montanans.

The redesigned site was launched on December 19th, 2008, and the early feedback has been overwhelmingly positive. But as with any good website, it is a continual work in progress. So when you visit the site, please let us know what you think of the redesign by taking the brief survey on the homepage. We make every effort to take user feedback into account. After all, this is your website too.

Career Resource Network
RESEARCH & ANALYSIS BUREAU

Welcome to the Montana Career Resource Network

We are dedicated to helping you get the academic and career skills needed to be productive in your chosen career. Please choose your user category:

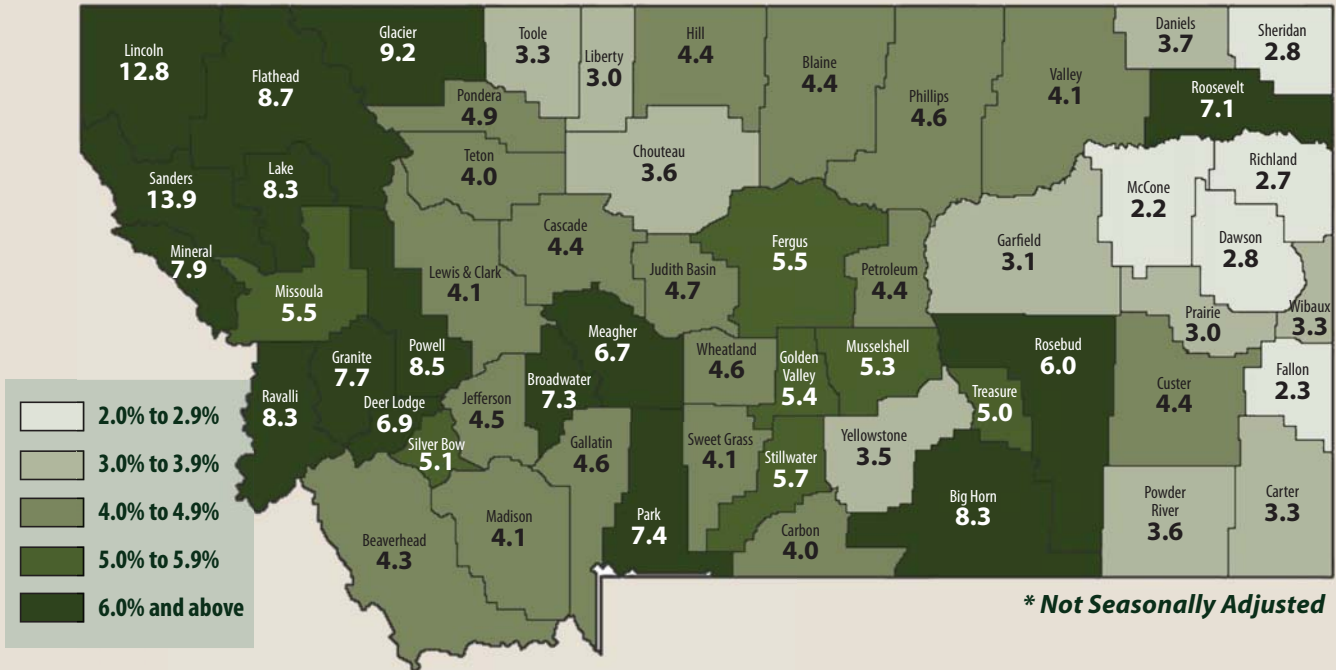
- Students**
- Job Seekers**
- Parents**
- Teachers/Counselors**

What's New from MCRN?

- Career Heroes Workbook**
With fun career awareness activities on every page, Career Heroes uses the concept of trading card games to introduce 3rd and 4th grade students to the skills and tools used in today's occupations.
- 2008 Career Guide**
The guide will help you take the first step in setting career goals. With descriptions of over 200 top occupations in Montana and the requirements in education, training, and experience for each.
- MCRN Connections Sept. Newsletter**
Sept. 2008: "Information, Choices, a Bright Future", New and Updated Products, and much more.
- Montana Career Information System**
MCIS includes skills and interest assessments, SAT/ACT practice tests, financial aid info, occupation sorts, resume features, and more.
- Career Exploration Tools**
Explore/Compare Occupations and Industries, Career Profiles, Videos, Search for Occupation, and more.
- Big Sky Pathways**
The Montana Association for Career and Technical Education (MCTACE) site provides weekly Big Sky Pathways updates, the Montana Careers Fields & Cluster Model, and other important information.

County Unemployment Rates* - December 2008

Montana Average Rate: 5.5%



MAIL OR E-MAIL? If you would like us to e-mail you a link to this publication on our website each month, e-mail us at: mediacontacts4rad@mt.gov. Please include your mailing address as it appears on this publication and your e-mail address.

2,300 copies of this public document were published at an estimated cost of \$0.65 cents per copy, for a total cost of \$1,492.00, which includes \$1,029.00 for printing and \$463.00 for distribution.